

## **2009 The Year in Review**

I want to take this opportunity to commend our fire fighters and officers for their efforts and dedication to their duty in 2009. We experienced many changes at the MFD during the last year. Following are just a few of the items that had a significant impact on our service provision.

Increasing demands of the job require increasing time and resources. We are continually looking for ways to become more efficient in our operations. Partnering with other departments and agencies is one way of meeting these needs.

One approach to this is our Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). The year brought us a big step closer to its implementation. The intent is to pre plan emergency incidents and mutual aid needs with our neighboring departments.

Another efficiency is accomplished through inspections and prevention. Many hours are spent each year reaching out to our community in an effort to educate and prevent emergencies. Fire safety code inspections are a perfect prevention example. This is followed by ordinances and laws designed to reduce and eliminate emergencies such as those requiring smoke detectors, and fire sprinklers. It is much safer, and less costly to prevent the emergency than to respond to it.

We are constantly mindful of the need to have our resources ready for the next incident. Last year, longstanding emergency response practices relative to the number of apparatus and personnel responding to incidents were adjusted in an effort to improve efficiency and safety.

The Rural Fire organization purchased a Polaris Ranger that is being used for numerous duties, most significantly at wildland fires, and rescue incidents. It has been outfitted with rescue equipment as well as water and fire hose. This piece of equipment has saved significant property as well as labor hours.

Four of the more significant incidents of the past year included a grain dryer fire that resulted in over \$400,000 in damage, a wildland fire of approximately 600 acres, a plane crash, and a drowning. The Ranger saw significant use in three of these incidents. The two fires listed here required the assistance of six to eight additional fire departments and are prime examples of the need for and purpose of MABAS. Three of the incidents required the involvement of various local, state, and federal agencies. I am proud to say that all agencies worked tremendously well together.

The benefits of the new classroom at Station #2 were greatly appreciated in 2009. Many classes otherwise held elsewhere were conducted in house. This facilitated more efficient responses to emergencies occurring during these classes. A new roof was completed on Station #1 which is 35 years old. The original roof was in poor repair and leaking into the building.

There is not enough room here to recognize the dedication, ambition, and ingenuity of our members. We are able to provide quality service in a fiscally responsible way thanks to our members applying special skills, above and beyond their public safety training, in many areas including, but not limited to the maintenance and repair of our buildings, equipment, and apparatus.

This is only a brief overview of what has been going on. The following pages offer a closer look into these items and many others that have kept us busy. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any of your thoughts or questions.

Thank you!

John R. Baus  
Fire Chief